



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

# New River Gorge National River General Management Plan

Foundation for Planning  
January 2006



# NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

## Planning for the Park's Next 15 to 20 Years

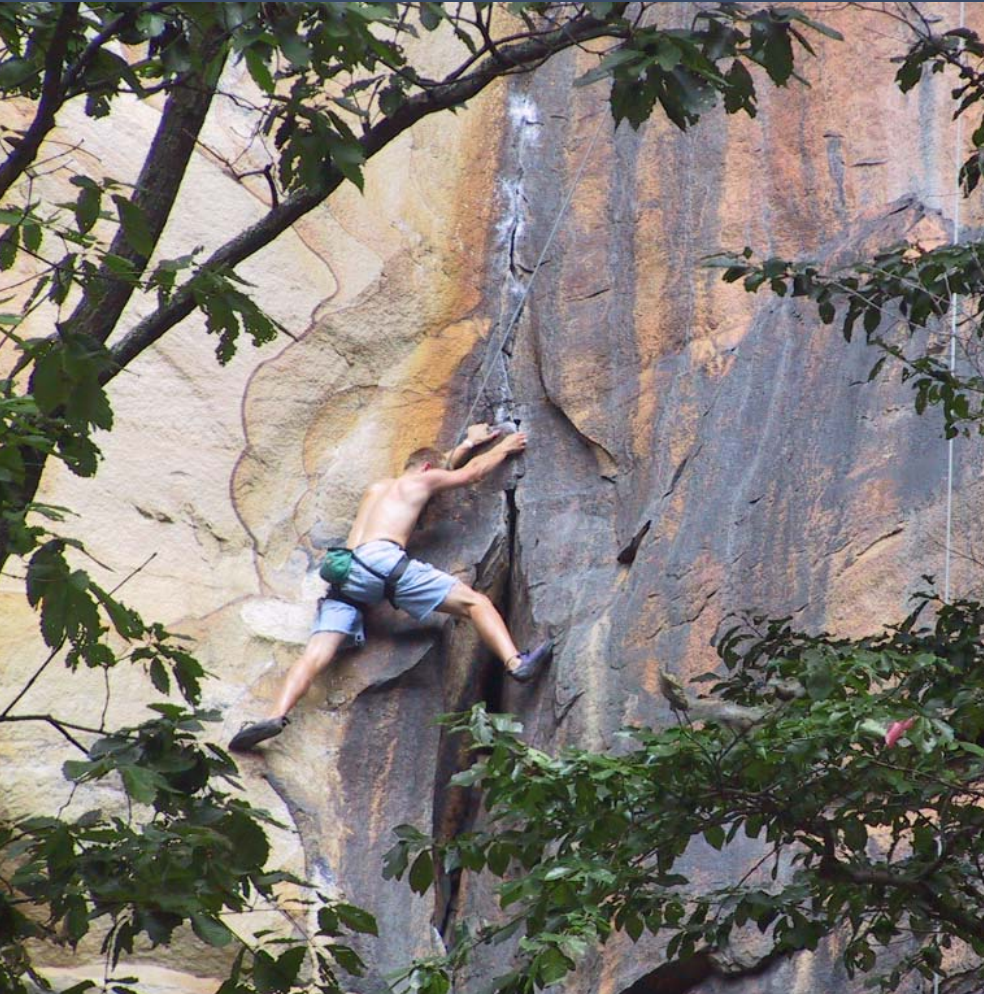


### PLANNING ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS

- What's most important at the park?
- What's going on with what's most important?
- What are the future possibilities for what's most important?
- What is the best long-term management direction for what's most important?



# What will the New Park GMP do?



**TIME FRAME: 15 to 20 Years**

## **ITEMS ADDRESSED:**

- how resources are managed
- what visitors experience and do
- what kinds of facilities are available
- how visitors get to and move around the park



## What will the new park GMP not do?



### THE NEW GMP WILL NOT:

- resolve all the issues
- provide details about how to manage resources
- provide detailed facility designs
- guarantee funding



## Planning Steps and Schedule

STEP	TIMEFRAME	PLANNING ACTIVITY
1	Summer 2005	Initiate GMP
2	Fall 2005 - Winter 2006	Foundation for Planning and Issues
3	Winter – Spring 2006	Develop and Evaluate Alternatives
4	Summer - Fall 2006	Prepare and Publish Draft GMP
5	Winter 2007	Revise and Publish Final Plan
6	2007 and Beyond	Implement the Approved Plan



## GMP Planning Step 2: Foundation Planning



**QUESTION:** What's most important about the park?

**GOAL:**

- a single shared understanding about what is most important about the park

**GMP ACTIVITIES IN STEP 2:**

- affirm the park purpose and significance
- identify fundamental and other important resources and values



## The Park's Establishing Legislation (Public Law 95-625)

***The Secretary of the Interior shall establish and administer the New River Gorge National River... for the purpose of... conserving and interpreting outstanding natural, scenic, and historic values and objects in and around the New River Gorge, and preserving as a free-flowing stream an important segment of the New River in West Virginia for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. (11/10/78)***



## Expressing What's Most Important at the Park

- **Park Purpose Statement**
- **Park Significance Statement**
- **Fundamental and Other Important Resources and Values**



## The Park's Purpose

**Park purpose statements** clarify the specific reasons why New River Gorge National River was established





## Draft Park Purpose

*The purposes of the New River Gorge National River are to:*

- conserve and enhance the free-flowing New River, its gorge, and the adjoining Appalachian Plateau, and their outstanding geologic and hydrologic features, terrestrial and aquatic wildlife communities, historic and archeological resources, cultural heritage, and scenic character*
- provide public understanding and appreciation of the park's natural, cultural, and scenic resources and values*





## The Park's Significance and Fundamental Resources



**Park significance statements** are statements of why, within a national, regional, and NPS systemwide context, New River Gorge National River's resources and values are important enough to warrant national park designation

**Park fundamental resources** are qualities of the park that are critical to achieving the park's purpose and maintaining its significance



## **Six Draft Significance Statements for the Park - Topics**

- 1. Geologic Features**
- 2. The River and Its Resources**
- 3. The Park's Forest**
- 4. Outstanding Historic Places**
- 5. Dramatic Views**
- 6. Exceptional Opportunities for Visitors**



# Draft Park Significance



## Significance Statement 1

### Geologic Features

*Flowing water is the definitive creative force of the New River Gorge. The New River, one of the oldest rivers in the world, continues to sculpt the longest and deepest river gorge in the Appalachian Mountains.*



## Draft Park Significance



### Significance Statement 2

#### The River and Its Resources

*The waters of the New River system contain a mosaic of hydrologic features and aquatic habitats, support a unique aquatic ecosystem, and nourish a riparian zone that supports rare plants, animals, and communities.*



## Draft Park Significance



### Significance Statement 3

#### The Park's Forest

*New River Gorge National River lies at the core of a globally significant forest, contains the most diverse flora of any river gorge in central and southern Appalachia, and provides essential habitat for endangered mammals and rare birds and amphibians.*



## Draft Park Significance



### Significance Statement 4

#### Outstanding Historic Features

*New River Gorge National River contains a large, outstanding and representative group of historic places that testify to the experiences of those diverse people who settled and developed this part of Appalachia between the 19th and mid-20th centuries.*



## Draft Park Significance



### Significance Statement 5

#### Dramatic Views

*Broad views of unbroken forest, steep gorge walls, and a river both tranquil and turbulent are punctuated by pastoral landscapes and industrial ruins to produce dramatic and vivid views from the river, along trails and rural roads, and from rocky overlooks.*



# Draft Park Significance



## Significance Statement 6

### Exceptional Opportunities for Visitors

*New River Gorge National River affords exceptional opportunities for exploration, adventure, discovery, solitude and community.*



## Foundation for Planning Elements – Review

- **Park Purpose Statement**
- **Park Significance Statements and Related Resources and Values**
  - 1. Geologic Features**
  - 2. The River and Its Resources**
  - 3. The Park's Forest**
  - 4. Outstanding Historic Places**
  - 5. Dramatic Views**
  - 6. Exceptional Opportunities for Visitors**



**At our January 2006 Public Meetings we asked you  
“What do you value most about New River Gorge National  
River?”**

**The following slides summarize what you told us...**





## What You Told Us at the January Public Meetings

*“What do you value most about New River Gorge National River?”*





## What do You Value Most about the Park?

### Your Most Frequent Answers

- **access to diverse outdoor recreation opportunities** (especially hunting, fishing, hiking)
- **historic resources and stories**
- **opportunities for peace and solitude**



## What do You Value Most about the Park?

### Your Next Most Frequent Answers

- scenic beauty
- the river and clean water
- wildlife
- economic development opportunities
- educational opportunities



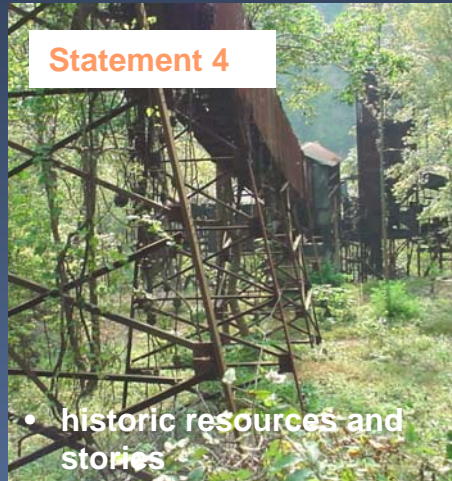
# What do You Value Most about the Park?

Your Answers Relate Well to the Six Park Significance Statements

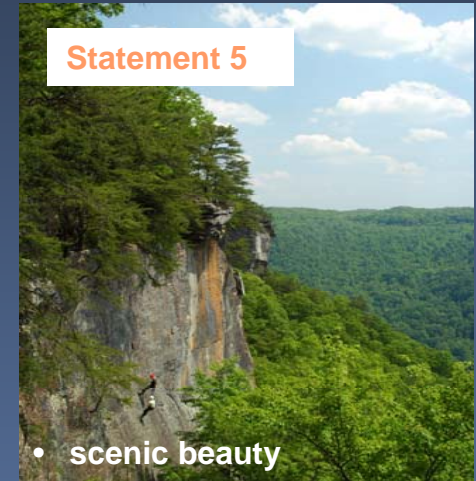
Statement 6



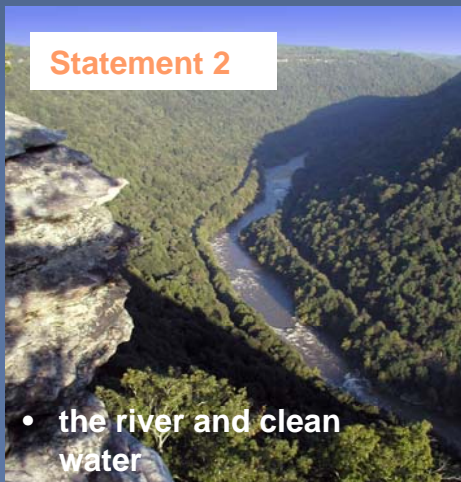
Statement 4



Statement 5



Statement 2



Statement 2



Statement 3

